

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF A NEOTYPE FOR  
*OPOPSITTA MARSHALLI* IREDALE, 1946. Z.N.(S.) 1773  
(see volume 23, pages 283-284)

By G. F. Mees (*Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, The Netherlands*)

I oppose this proposal as it does not meet with any of the requirements under which a neotype can be established. With reference to Article 75 of the Code\*, I want to point out in particular that:

1. The original type material, including the holotype, does still exist.
2. There does not appear to be any uncertainty about the identity of the type material, or about its type locality.
3. The proposer fails to mention any systematic or nomenclatural advantage that would accrue from setting aside the holotype and having a neotype, and from his own remarks it is clear that there is none.
4. There does not appear to be any need for placing *Opopsitta marshalli* on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology as its priority in the population it represents is uncontested, though it may be, by subjective judgment, a synonym of *Opopsitta diophthalma aruensis* (Schlegel, 1874), which has more than seventy years priority over *O. marshalli* Iredale, 1946.
5. If a neotype is established on such slender grounds, the Commission would go against its own Rules, and moreover would create a dangerous precedent.

By Curtis W. Sabrosky (*Entomology Research Division, Agr. Res. Serv., U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.*)

Although not an ornithologist, I wish to register opposition on general grounds to the designation of a neotype for *Opopsitta marshalli*, as proposed by Forshaw.

2. Technically, because the holotype is still in existence, a neotype is not justified under Article 75. Nor do the circumstances meet the requirement of "exceptional circumstances when a neotype is necessary in the interests of stability of nomenclature".

3. Interpretation of the taxonomic status of *marshalli* really depended on the collection of adequate material from the vicinity of the type locality, for study and comparison with *aruensis* from the Aru Islands. The conclusions were derived from that material, they could have been reached in the absence of any original material at all, and they were arrived at even though the holotype and other original material were in poor condition. The holotype, even though damaged, continues to function as a name-bearer. No neotype is necessary.

4. The stringent requirements of Article 75 were intended to discourage the designation of neotypes except in really serious cases for which a neotype appeared to serve a real purpose in avoiding confusion. The present instance, with a definite type-locality known and with original type material still in existence, does not meet the requirements and does not, in my opinion, justify plenary action to set aside the holotype. Such action is an extreme step that should only be taken in cases of real urgency and serious confusion.

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\* Forshaw requested use of plenary powers to designate a neotype and therefore the requirements of Art. 75 would be set aside (Editor)